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FROM

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THE

WIZARD OF THE NORTH;

AND

OTHER POEMS.

PRINTED BY BALLANTYNE AND COMPANY, PAUL'S WORK, EDINBURGH.

THE

WIZARD OF THE NORTH;

THE

VAMPIRE BRIDE;

AND

OTHER POEMS.

BY

THE HON. HENRY LIDDELL.

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD, EDINBURGH;
AND T. CADELL, LONDON.
M.DCCC.XXXIII.

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HARVARD COLLEGE
July 5, 1927
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TO

MRS LOCKHART,

AND TO

MISS SCOTT,

WHOSE ACCOMPLISHMENTS GLADDENED THE EXISTENCE,

AND WHOSE FILIAL AFFECTION COMFORTED

THE LATTER DAYS

OF THEIR

ILLUSTRIOUS FATHER,

THIS HUMBLE AND UNWORTHY TRIBUTE

TO HIS VIRTUES AND GENIUS

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED BY

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

However humble the pretensions of this Volume may be, the object of its publication can be liable to no animadversion. It is the Author's intention to devote the proceeds of its sale to the purposes contemplated by the Committee of Noblemen and Gentlemen, admirers of the late Sir Walter Scott, for establishing some permanent Memorial of his Genius and Virtues.

Should it be the Author's good fortune to convey a transient pleasure to any of his readers, he will, in such case, derive a double satisfaction from the success of his labour.

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THE

WIZARD OF THE NORTH.

A POEM.

WITHOUT question, the subject of all poetry was originally direct and personal. Fictitious character is a refinement, and comparatively modern; for abstraction is in its nature slow, and always follows the progress of Philosophy. Men had always friends and enemies before they knew the exact nature of vice and virtue; they naturally, and with their best powers of eloquence, whether in prose or verse, magnified and set off the one; vilified and traduced the other.

BURKE'S *Hints for an Essay on the Drama.*

THE

WIZARD OF THE NORTH.

A POEM.

No rites accurst, or incantations dire,
Awake the music of my slumbering lyre,
Though Grecia's deathless Bard[1] might not disdain
The cup Circæan, and the Siren's strain;
And harps of loftiest harmony[2] have rung
The magic terrors of Medea's tongue;
The balm of life renew'd, the dragon car,
Earth's new-born champions mix'd in deadly war;
The babes devoted to a cruel fate,
Neglected love, indomitable hate.

[1] Homer. [2] Euripides and Ovid.

Not such the bold intent—nor do I sing
The slaves gigantic of the Lamp and Ring;
The stern Enchanter, whose unholy spell
Eclipsed the Moon, and shook the powers of Hell!
The wandering Eremite, with beard of snow,
With tottering footstep, and with wrinkled brow,
Dissembling hypocrite! whose wicked art
Could cloak the foulness of his lustful heart.
Such dreams have fled in this enlighten'd age,
Such dreams have charm'd in Ariosto's page.
For me, may Merlin's mystic secrets rest
'Mid Cambrian rocks, in Taliessin's[1] breast;—
By me unheeded, Druid phantoms range
The Runic altars of their rude Stonehenge;
And Odin howl his war-song to the wail
Of rocking forests in the Norway gale.

But hail, thou Muse! that didst of old inspire
The mighty rhapsodies of Pindar's lyre,

[1] Taliessin. The Welsh bard to whom Merlin bequeathed his prophecies.

Whether in praise of gods he swept the strings,
Or sung the godlike deeds of hero kings,
Whose prowess dragg'd the Centaur's rage to death,
And quench'd the terrors of Chimæra's breath;
Or when, through Elis' peopled realms afar,
He told the triumphs of the sounding car,
And gave to immortality the fame
Of wreathed victors in Olympia's game.[1]
Yet all abash'd and awe-struck, I adore
Thy power mysterious, and thine aid implore;
For Byron woo'd thee in thy native clime,
'Mid wrong and robbery, and war and crime,—
Ungenial elements! but his the power
To waken transport in Affliction's hour,
To cast the light of Poesy on things
That Virtue shrinks from, and explore the springs
Of warring passions in the human breast,
That seek no comfort, and obtain no rest,—

[1] Seu Deos, regesque canit Deorum
Sanguinem, &c. &c.

HORAT. *ad Pindarum.*

Himself the victim of each fancied wrong,
The mournful monument of all he sung;
Till the vex'd spirit, working its decay,
Fretted the feeble tenement of clay.[1]
Be this at least his praise—His glowing mind
Form'd glorious plans of freedom for mankind;
And as of old, th' Athenian Minstrel's[2] cry
Led Sparta's sons to death or victory,
So Byron rallied Europe to the fight,
Where power tyrannick strove with feebler right,
Snatch'd a last brand from Argos' funeral pyre,
And kindled Liberty's extinguish'd fire,
Impell'd the patriot to the battle-plain,
Cheer'd the survivor, deified the slain,
Told how their mighty sires by force roll'd back
Barbarick legions on their homeward track,
How Athens strew'd with Persian wrecks the sea,
How Sparta triumph'd at Thermopylæ;

[1] A fiery soul, which, working out its way,
Fretted the pigmy body to decay,
And o'er-inform'd the tenement of clay.
Absalom and Achitophel.

[2] Tyrtæus.

Then in the bosom of regenerate Greece,
Breath'd his last sigh for concord and for peace.

But thou hast spread thy pinions, Muse, and left
The radiance beaming on Parnassus' cleft,
The leafy shadows of Castalia's rill,
Olympus' height and Pindus' snow-clad hill,
To fix the glories of thy mountain throne
By Tweed's enchanted stream, on Eildon's triple cone.

For on these banks abode the Wizard Wight
That stay'd the rover in her airy flight,
The Bard of Scotia's olden time, whose song
Each haunted cairn and echoing rock prolong,—
The sage Enchanter! whose uplifted wand
O'er past and present held supreme command:
For e'en as Tweed's broad surface, clear and deep,
Reflects each tufted knoll and castled steep,
So in his Magic Mirror may we trace
The quaint old garb, the long-forgotten face.

Princes and heroes pass the changing scene,
The Lion Conqueror and the Virgin Queen;
The Norman Baron and the Saxon Thane,
The collar'd Bondsman and the feudal Train;
The turban'd Emir, on his mettled steed
Skimming the desert with a whirlwind's speed;
The haughty Templar's Saracenic crew,
The lowly Palmer and the cringing Jew;
The gentle Troubadour, the Red Cross Knight,
The Council sage, the spirit-stirring Fight;
The stern Enthusiast and the Churchman staid,
The melting Lover and the timid Maid;
The mitred Prelate and the lofty Peer,
The stately Dame, the gallant Cavalier;—
While frequent, at their Master's beck, repair
Fantastic shades and viewless forms of air.

Nor less the wild localities amaze
The mind entranced, and charm th' enraptured gaze;

Now through the howling wilderness we roam,[1]
The sky our canopy, the sands our home—
Where dark Asphaltus' slimy sea rolls o'er
The smoking wrecks of that unhallow'd shore,
Where once th' accursed Cities of the Plain
'Mid vineyards tower'd, and fields of waving grain,
Ere yet their crimes, too great to be forgiven,
Provoked the vengeance of insulted Heaven.
Sulphureous vapours load with death the wave
Within whose bosom Siddim found her grave;
Nor ought relieves the weary Pilgrim's glance
Along th' unbroken desert's drear expanse;
Nor tree nor bush their leafy screen display
To suns that flash "intolerable day."

Or now we navigate the roaring deep[2]
Beneath the gloom of frowning Sumburgh's steep,
Where clanging sea-fowl hang their giddy nest,
Wheel in mid air, or skim the billow's crest;

[1] Vide the opening of the Talisman.
[2] Vide the opening of the Pirate.

Where Scandinavian Pirates moor'd of old
Their dragon bark, and storm'd each mountain hold;[1]
Where many a Saga's uncouth legend sings
The bloody conquests of the fierce Sea Kings;
And many a mystic rhyme, and warlike dance,
Prolong the records of antique romance.
Where the vex'd Spirit of the Northern Coast
Mourns the long twilight in his realm of frost,
And the tall Sea-snake or the Kraken's form
Loom huge and hideous through the coming storm;
Or green-hair'd Mermaids chant the tuneful lay
To midnight echoes in the moon-lit bay.

Or, lo! where kilted clansmen crowd before[2]
The Highland towers of stern Macullamore,
Whose pennon'd barks, and close reef'd galleys line
In long array the shores of fair Loch-Fine;

[1] "Their barks the dragons of the wave."
Lay of the Last Minstrel.

[2] Vide description of Argyle's Castle at Inverary in "A Legend of Montrose."

While ruthless acts of violence and blood
Pollute the current of that silver flood.
The barr'd portcullis, and the loop-hole grate,
The flanking battlements, the frowning gate;
The gory scaffold, and the sever'd head
Impaled aloft upon the rude stockade;
The plaided corpses of the wild and free,
The muffled group beneath the gallows-tree;
The wailing coronach of stifled grief
Proclaim the terrors of the Feudal Chief.

But why prolong examples, and retrace
Our ling'ring steps through each familiar place,
Or strive with dull minuteness to rehearse
A tedious catalogue in measured verse?
All that a poet's genius e'er conceived,
All that a painter's science e'er achieved;
The cloister'd monastery, the ruin'd tower,
The lordly mansion, or the silvan bower;
The busy throng of men, the tumult's roar,
The silent mountain, and the lonely shore;

The foaming cataract, the forest brake,
The red sun gleaming in the western lake,
The boundless prospect lost in distant floods,
Wide chequer'd plains, and intermingled woods;
The vex'd waves over Ocean wildly driven,
The dread magnificence of varying Heaven:
These hath he seen, and with reflected light,
With these he strikes our senses, charms our sight;
As through the burnish'd lens each object near
On the dark chamber's[1] floor is pictured clear,
The pleased spectator in each passer by
Discerns an image of reality,
While ships and buildings sea and sky illume
The living prospect in the dusky room.
Such powers are his,—and still he conjures more
In swift succession, from his boundless store;
Historian—Painter—Poet,—He alone
As all and each conspicuous hath shone;
View'd Nature's sweet varieties, and sung
A painter's study with a poet's tongue,

[1] Camera Obscura.

Caught the clear features of each transient age,
And stamp'd the portrait on his glowing page.

To such all praise;—but higher far be given
To that, the nearer attribute of Heaven:
That mightier power, and more exalted art,
That paints the workings of the human heart.
Vast though the difference of place or clime,
Of wintry tempest, or of summer's prime,
The rebel heart of man, inconstant still
'Twixt each extremity of good or ill;
But oft-times wavering like the balanced scale,
Or quivering vane, the sport of every gale;
Now low, now high, by counter movements driven,
Now sear'd by blasts from Hell, now fann'd by breath
of Heaven;
Lured by each passion, coloured by each thought,
True to no guide, by no example taught,
Alternately man's tyrant and his slave,
Cloyed with possession, destined still to crave;

This wayward heart in its chameleon dye
Transcends all miracles of earth and sky,
And mocks the keen enquirer that would ask
Its inmost secrets, or remove the mask
That veils each varied purpose from the ken
Of its possessor, or his fellow men.
To most denied—yet not denied to him,
This guarded magazine of pride and whim,
This seal'd and secret box, whose contents he
Displays to daylight by a master-key;
This labyrinth of error, traced by few
Save him whose art Dædalean owns the clue;
This Gordian ravel of intricacy
Which some may sever, he alone untie;—
This strange enigma, dark to vulgar eyes,
This mass of endless inconsistencies;—
This human heart in fine, to him reveals
All that it thinks, or knows, or sees, or feels—
This heart by him of its offences shriven,
May choose the better part, and learn to be forgiven.[1]

[1] Besides the admirable morality universally inculcated in all Sir Walter Scott's writings, two religious Discourses have been published from his pen which amply justify the allusion in this line.

Lo! the stern regicide,[1] whose startled gaze
The portrait of his murder'd lord surveys;
How Nature shrinks from that calm steady eye
That gleams in uncomplaining majesty,
And wild emotions choke th' undaunted breath
That doom'd its master to a felon's death—
Though self-deluding conscience strive to fling
Her shadowy vestments o'er the bleeding King,
And dark Fanaticism advance to plead
The dire compulsion of an awful deed!
Till roused Ambition in a loftier tone
Peal his high summons to the vacant throne,
And hopes now dawning into promise, roll
Prophetic visions o'er the conqueror's soul,
Where all but regal splendour shall await
The politic Protector of the state,
And England bow beneath the dread command
Of his, the mail'd Usurper's, iron hand.

[1] Cromwell. Vide the scene in "Woodstock," where he contemplates the picture of Charles I., by Vandyck.

Or turn we where the blaze of knightly fame
Glows like a furnace in the heart of Græme?
That loyal, bold, uncompromising heart,
That scorn'd the coward's, loathed the traitor's part;
By glory guided, and by danger fired,
By duty nerved, by chivalry inspired,
In converse courteous, as becomes a knight,
In council sage, invincible in fight;
And, oh! that aught should cloud a shield so clear,
Alike unmoved by mercy as by fear!

Oh Loyalty! thou sacred generous name,
What gallant spirits hast thou led to fame!
Yet, whence this fond enthusiasm, or why
Cling to the wreck of fallen dynasty?
Granted, the State requires a sovereign hand
To sway the sceptre o'er a subject land,
Kings are but men, and worthier may be found
Than most whom right legitimate hath crown'd;
Then if a king presume to violate
By word or deed, his compact with the State,

Dethrone, discard him, and transfer the rule
To some mob-chosen, more obedient tool.
So sophists reason, and so knaves may teach
Fools to believe the doctrine that they preach.
But Loyalty abjures the sophist's plan
For rearing treason on the rights of man;
Records his sworn allegiance, and lays down
His wealth, his life, his all, to save the crown;
While calmer reason need not shrink to ask
What ruin lurks behind the rebel's mask;
Bold though the pretext, plausible the cause
Of outraged rights, and violated laws,
What rights are sacred, or what laws are known
To those who sap the basis of the throne?
Who sneer at good, and with a Belial's tongue
Perplex distinctions between right and wrong;
Root out long cherish'd feelings, in exchange
Plant envy, hate, suspicion, and revenge;
Foment sedition, and asunder force
The loosen'd bonds of social intercourse;

Goad ignorance to madness, yet enchain
A frenzied people in a party's train;
Then pander to rebellion's thirsting brood,
The price of freedom in a monarch's blood.
Curst be such arts! upon their author's head
May Earth and Heaven their direst vengeance shed;
For him may keen remorse and fear prepare
The bed of anguish and the poison'd fare;
The shirt of mail, that wards th' assassin's knife,
Shall add new terrors to his dastard life;
The widow's malison, the orphan's tear,
Load the sad course of each declining year,
Till all the blood his crimes had caused to flow,
Bring retribution of eternal woe.

Yet far the thought from me, and from my friend,
Beneath the scourge of tyranny to bend,
Or basely sacrifice on crouching knee
At Grandeur's shrine, the birthright of the free.
But Anarchy (the tyrant overthrown)
Sets up a thousand in the place of one;

And Loyalty resists the blow alike,
That Rebels threaten, or that Despots strike;
And best secures fair Freedom's hallow'd dower,
By fearing God, and honouring lawful power.

Such the pure ray of Chivalry that glows
Within the hearts of Claver'se and Montrose,
Sheds a last gleam on Ivor's broken flower,[1]
And gilds the Knight of Ditchley's dying hour.

More had we sung, and haply touch'd again
The chord of sympathy ne'er struck in vain;
Wept with St Leonard's Lily,[2] traced the source
Of lofty principle and moral force,
That fortified her sister's[3] soul, to brook
From anger'd majesty the searching look,
Till Nature's pleading, though in phrases mean,
Drew unreluctant tears from England's queen.

[1] Flora M'Ivor. Vide the conclusion of "Waverley."
[2] Effie Deans, the Lily of St Leonard's.
[3] Jeanie Deans. Vide "Heart of Mid-Lothian.'

Or we had own'd the terrors of that hour,
When spectres walk abroad, and spells have power,
When the lorn soul, o'erburden'd and opprest,
Would fain from trouble flee, and be at rest;
Or coward conscience conjures up within
The deeper gloom of unrepented sin,
And ghastly visions to the mind portend
A doom'd existence, a disastrous end.
Such thy forebodings, gallant Fergus,[1] when
The Phantom cross'd thee in the lonely glen,
And shadow'd forth to thy devoted race,
A future fraught with ruin and disgrace.

More had we sung—for once we thought to bring
E'en to its shrine this votive offering;
And hoped, perchance, the mighty Master's smile
Might cheer the purpose, and reward the toil.
Delusive Hope! no more that lip hath power
T' enrich the memory of the fleeting hour,

[1] Vide the vision of the "Bodach Glas" in "Waverley."

Or summon from the past a wondrous store
Of knightly deeds and legendary lore.
That eye is darken'd now, whose mental sight
Could pierce the regions of eternal night;
Still is that heart, whose pulse's varying throb
Beat in high sympathy with half the globe;
And quench'd that hallow'd fire, whose radiance shone
Like Heaven's own orb, throughout each circling zone.
Mourn, Caledonia! Mourn thy son, and shroud
Thy sorrowing face in universal cloud!
His shell lies broken by the tinkling rill,
His harp is silent on the lonely hill!
The dreary wailing of th' autumnal wood—
The melancholy murmur of the flood—
The shrieking ghosts of ancient heroes slain,
Borne on the night-mist o'er the battle-plain—
The hoarse wind roaring on the troubled lake,
Proclaim the doleful tidings, as they wake
The mountain-echoes in their rocky bed,
That SCOTT is number'd with thy mighty dead.

Mourn, Britain! mourn the extinction of a mind
Form'd to delight, instruct, and bless mankind.
The true and steady Patriot, unsubdued
By clamour of the giddy multitude,
Alike unwilling to relax the hand
That holds the rein with firm but mild command,
Or on the other side too close to draw
The checks of just authority and law.
Historian of our glories! well for thee
T' have died before that hour thou liv'dst to see,
When Faction bared his arm, and Tumult's cry
Yell'd through the virtuous home of royalty;
When Scotland saw foul scorn and outrage shed
Upon her Sage's grey, uncover'd head;[1]
And England blush'd for the unmanly wrong
Done to her Chief by London's rabble throng;
Done on that day, whose deeds from age to age
Shall beam emblazon'd on th' historic page,

[1] It is but too true that Sir W. Scott was received with insult at the last public meeting he attended in Scotland;—a fact that I would not have mentioned, but to exhibit in its true colours the ugliness of faction.

When trumpet-tongued Renown her clarion blew
In triumph o'er the field of Waterloo,
And rearing Freedom's banner to the sky,
Deliver'd Europe shouted "Victory!"
Howl on, base dogs! and strong in numbers close
Around the Lion in his calm repose;
Exhaust your petty vengeance while ye may,
And wound with slander whom ye fear to slay.
The everlasting Sun his high career
Majestic holds through each revolving year,
Though clouds obscure his disk, and tempests blow
In wild confusion on the plains below.
Mobs have their day, and Faction's reign is o'er,
Reptiles may crawl where reptiles crawl'd before,
The laurell'd Hero and the sacred Bard
From future generations claim reward,
And to remotest ages, unforgot
Shall live the names of WELLINGTON and SCOTT!

Mourn him all nations! wheresoe'er the song
Of Faith and Hope is raised from Christian throng;

Where "bells have knoll'd to church" at morn or even,
And revelation points the way to Heaven!
Where Knowledge hath unroll'd "her ample page,
Rich with the spoils of every clime and age,"
Or Language renders in another tone
Thoughts from strange lands, and labours not her own;
Or wheresoe'er barbarick tribes afar,
Renouncing deeds of violence and war,
Have own'd the common bond of social life,
That substitutes security for strife,
And dawning Reason pours abroad her light
On realms emerging from Cimmerian night.

Mourn, universal Nature! mourn, for he,
Nature's own Poet, living worshipp'd thee.
He is thine heritage! his bones let Death
Return unto the soil that gave him breath;
And Caledonia still record with pride,
That SCOTT with her had lived, with her had died:
But now his immortality of mind
Belongs to Nature, and to all mankind.

True Genius, link'd to no peculiar place,
O'erleaps the narrow bounds of time and space;
Its lustre fills the world—its name survives
The fleeting records of a thousand lives,[1]
And unborn myriads shall revere that name,
Graved in the temple of eternal Fame.

Ye that have known the subject of my song,
The notes of grief in tenderer strain prolong!
Recall those pleasant hours that glided by,
Lit with the sunshine of his glowing eye,
When all-inspired, the Poet would rehearse
Some stirring deed in legendary verse,
And wake to memory the wild alarms
That roused the Border Chivalry to arms;
Or when the changing tone, pathetic, low,
Roll'd 'neath the shadows of his dark'ning brow,
In some sad tale of Scotland's olden time,
Recorded vengeance, suffering, and crime.

[1] Lives—generations.

So the clear river, dancing in the ray,
Reflects the brilliance of the summer day,
Or murmurs mournfully beneath the shade
Of high o'erarching rocks, and gloomy forest glade.
In him we saw that rarest union join'd,
Of boundless talents with the simplest mind.
No bitter controversies vex'd his brain,
No wit that wanton'd in another's pain;
Th' invidious cavil, or the critic's sneer,
Provoked no anger, and inspired no fear;
The shafts of malice flew, but harmless fell—
For who that wrote so much e'er wrote so well?
Who else can look upon that scene of strife,
The labours of a literary life,
Nor wish one single page, one single word,
For Virtue's sake, unwritten or unheard?
Be this thy glory, SCOTT! (how few may crave
An equal right to hopes beyond the grave,)
That one undeviating moral still
Is drawn from every tale of good or ill—

That vice, howe'er successful for a time,
Incurs at last the penalty of crime:
But he that hopes for happiness above,
On earth that values friendship, fame, or love,
Must keep the path of duty, rarely trod,
Be just to man, and faithful to his God.

That thou hast taught us this, the world can tell!
Reap thy reward in Heaven—on earth farewell!

THE

VAMPIRE BRIDE.

In the year 1058, a young man of noble birth had been married at Rome, and during the period of the nuptial feast, having gone with his companions to play at ball, he put his marriage-ring on the finger of a broken statue of Venus in the area, to remain while he was engaged in the recreation. Desisting from the exercise, he found the finger on which he had put his ring contracted firmly against the palm, and attempted in vain either to break it or to disengage his ring. He concealed the circumstance from his companions, and returned at night with a servant, when he found the finger extended, and his ring gone. He dissembled the loss, and returned to his wife; but whenever he attempted to embrace her, he found himself prevented by something dark and dense, which was tangible though not visible, interposing between them, and he heard a voice saying, "Embrace me! for I am Venus, whom this day you wedded, and I will not restore your ring."

The story from which this extract is made will be found in the Introduction to the tale of Tamlane, in the second volume of Scott's "Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border." Amusing, and, as Lord Byron says, *incredibly attested* accounts of Vampires, may be found in Mr Southey's Notes to "Thalaba."

THE

VAMPIRE BRIDE.

Say why on this day, by the morn's first ray,
  Were the church doors open'd wide?
While the bells they ring, and the choristers sing;
  Say what may this betide?

The bells they ring, and the choristers sing,
  And the church doors are open'd wide,
For Albert the gay, on this holy day,
  To the altar leads his bride.

With trumpets and drums, all trembling she comes,
  Beneath her bridal veil;
So shrinks below its shroud of snow
  The early primrose pale.

But Albert among the glittering throng
  His prancing steed bestrode—
With plumed hat and robe of state
  Full royally he rode.

At the stately porch of St Peter's Church
  Alight the blooming pair;
And the proud aisles rang, as the choristers sang,
  To bid them welcome there.

The holy Priest hath their union blest,
  And now, in the sight of Heaven,
Eternal troth is sworn by both,
  And the mutual pledge is given.

A ring so rare, of emerald fair,
  He placed her finger upon;
And in true token of faith unbroken
  She gave him a sapphire stone.

With hand join'd to hand, at the altar they stand,
  And loudly the choristers sing;
When a shuddering came over Albert's frame,
  And he dropt his bridal ring.

As downward he bent with swift intent
  That precious ring to save,
He heard a groan 'neath the altar stone,
  And the church smell'd like a grave.

And a deathlike chill through his veins did thrill,
  And his heart beat thick with fear;
And his head swam round, for that ghastly sound
  Was more than a mortal might bear.

But he sprung up in haste, and his ring he held fast,
  And he gazed on his virgin bride,
And her hand he press'd to his beating breast,
  And his heart swell'd again with pride.

And the cloud no more on his brow did lower,
As she leaned his arm upon;
So the blackness of night on the mountain's height,
Is chased by the summer sun.

He led her straight to his palace gate,
While gaily the "Vivas" sound;
For the lordly train, as they left the fane,
Did scatter angels round.

In her bridesmaids' care that lady fair
Retires for repose at noon;
It was idlesse all in the palace hall,
As the flagging hours creep on.

The gallants resort to the tennis-court,
And the bridegroom join'd them there;
For when was there a manly sport
That Albert would not share?

And soon 'tis his chance the score to advance,
  When his ring he again let fall;
And lo! close at hand did a statue stand
  On its marble pedestal.

'Twas of sculpture rare, and passing fair,
  A girdle bound its waist;
And words unknown on the circling zone
  Mysteriously were traced.

The right hand did rest on its swelling breast,
  The left was forward flung,
As of one who in fear at the sound she did hear,
  In mute attention hung.

"'Tis a goodly thought,"—says Albert, caught
  By the bright and proffer'd hand—
And without more delay on the finger of clay
  He slid the mystic band.

—" But was it a dream? or did the figure seem
To vibrate to me alone?
And did the sun's ray bewilder me,—or say,
Did a smile wreathe its lips of stone?"

Above and around the ball did bound,
And the hall rung with many a jest;
Yet a boding drear thrill'd in Albert's ear,
And strange thoughts his heart oppresst.

'Tis the hour to prepare for the bridal cheer,
And the grooms for Albert call;
For in jewell'd state doth the bride await
Her guests in the palace-hall.

But Albert in vain strove his ring to regain,
From the finger of marble fair;
Brightly it shone, while it clove to the stone,
As though it were frozen there.

Fast and faster it clove, still he earnestly strove
  To detach that charmed gold;
When the finger of stone doubled slowly down,
  And the bridegroom's blood ran cold.

* * * * * *

A page stood near Count Albert's chair,
  To wait his lord's behest,
With laughing cheek and rosy neck
  Beneath his broider'd vest.

"Come hither, come hither, my little foot-page,
  For ere yon sand be run,
By the torch's light, or the moonbeam bright,
  An errand must be done.

"To the courts below thou must quickly go,
  To the court where we toss the ball;
There with outstretch'd hand doth a statue stand,
  On its marble pedestal.

"With incautious haste, on that hand I placed
This noon a sapphire stone,
No more may it linger on the marble finger;—
So haste thee, my page, and begone;

"And mark me, take a hammer, to break
The finger that's doubled down,
For *there* is the ring that I bid thee bring;
Now speed me mine errand—and run."

The sand is run, the errand is done—
But the boy came trembling back;
And the rosy red from his cheek hath fled,
And his limbs they quiver and quake.

"Oh! master dear, no ring is there!
No finger bent at all!
But the statue doth stand, with extended hand,
On its lofty pedestal!

"It gleam'd wan and white, in the pale moonlight,
And the courts look'd chill and drear;
Methought it did smile, as I gazed the while!—
I wellnigh swoon'd for fear.

"Unmoved by a breeze, the tall cypress-trees
Moan'd and waved in the silent air;
And a meteor star shot swift and far
Through the sparkling hemisphere.

"And the bats unclean, with leathern skin,
Flapp'd heavily around;
And a strange dog did howl, while shriek'd the owl,
And like a grave smell'd the ground."

Back shrunk the page, for an ashen hue
Spread wide over Albert's cheek;
And there stood on his brow clammy drops of dew,
And in vain he essay'd to speak.

But the red wine he quaff'd, and he fearfully laugh'd,
  But he drew a long sigh between;
His hand he pass'd o'er his brow in haste,
  Then rose and changed the scene.

* * * * * *

The bridesmaids are gone, and the bride left alone,
  And the sounds of mirth are fled;
And Albert, released from the dance and the feast,
  Hath sought the nuptial bed.

But his heart beat quick, and his breath came thick,
  And a nameless dread crept o'er him;
Yet he turn'd with delight to his lady bright,
  Reclin'd in her beauty before him.

He turned unto his lady true,
  And he felt her flutt'ring breath;
When an icy chill through his veins did thrill,
  And he shrunk from the grasp of death.

And a bitter, bitter cry broke forth in agony,—
  "Save me! for mercy! save!"
For in his arms he did hold a figure damp and cold,
  And the couch smell'd like a grave.

"Thou this day didst me wed, and I come to thy bed,
  Thy nuptial joys to share;
And in token true, the sapphire blue
  On my finger still I wear."

Another bitter cry, and he senseless did lie—
  For the phantom marble prest
Its loathsome form 'gainst his bosom warm,
  And weigh'd down his lab'ring breast.

And ever and anon murmur'd the lips of stone,—
  "This bridal couch is thine;
To thy bed I come, but ere three days are gone,
  Albert, thou com'st to mine."

The morning light hath dispell'd the night
  Unhappy Albert lay
With throbbing head on his nuptial bed,
  Cold as the coffin'd clay.

But the Demon guest from his struggling breast
  Had its icy grasp withdrawn;
Away it flew, as the first cock crew
  In sign of the blushing dawn.

And his faithful bride, who lay by his side,
  Awoke at the self-same hour;
For a slumber deep did her senses steep
  While the spectre Bride had power.

Devoutly she pray'd to the Virgin for aid,
  For her heart beat with nameless fears;
She laid her warm cheek on her Albert's neck,
  And fast fell the trickling tears.

And she folded his face in her tender embrace,
  And her soft and balmy breath
Thaw'd the icy chains which froze his veins,
  And dispell'd the shades of death.

"Now send for the priest, let my sins be confest,
  Short space to me is given;
Though the Demon claim my mortal frame,
  Yet my soul may find rest in Heaven."

The holy priest hath his sins confest,
  And now, with shuddering cold,
Of his summons dread to the Phantom's bed
  Hath Albert darkly told:—

And how by some spell of the powers of Hell
  She had gain'd his sapphire stone;
And in right of that ring, how the foul damp thing
  Did claim him for her own.

The priest turn'd pale at the ghostly tale,
  And he shook his tonsured head;
And the livelong day he did fast and pray
  Beside the sufferer's bed.

Cold horror sate in those halls of state,
  Which had echoed the nuptial song;
And the bridal wreath seem'd the emblem of death,
  And fear froze every tongue.

The second night came, but the taper's flame
  Dispell'd the thickening gloom;
For they trusted with prayer the fiend to scare,
  If again she sought the room.

And a cross of gold the priest did hold,
  And at intervals they raise,
In chorus meet, the vespers sweet,
  To the Blessed Virgin's praise.

And his faithful bride lay awake by his side,
'Till St Peter's clock toll'd one;
When a slumber deep o'er her senses did creep,
For the Demon's power had begun.

The taper's light was extinguish'd quite,
And the choristers all dropp'd to rest,
And the priest sunk down, like a monument stone,
With the cross on his bosom prest.

And again a bitter cry broke forth in agony,—
"Save me! for mercy! save!"
For Albert did hold the Spectre damp and cold,
And the couch smell'd like a grave!

"I am come—I am come! once again from the tomb,
In return for the ring which you gave;
That I am thine, and that thou art mine,
This nuptial pledge receive."

He lay like a corse 'neath the Demon's force,
  And she wrapp'd him in a shroud;
And she fixed her teeth his heart beneath,
  And she drank of the warm life-blood!

And ever and anon murmur'd the lips of stone,
  "Soft and warm is this couch of thine,
Thou'lt to-morrow be laid on a colder bed—
  Albert! that bed will be mine!"

Another bitter cry, and he senseless did lie,
  For the fiend sucked his stifled breath;
And the blood flowed fast from his wounded breast,
  And he suffered the pangs of death.

The morning light hath chased the night,
  And the fiend hath its grasp withdrawn;
Away it flew, as the first cock crew
  In sign of the blushing dawn.

And the startled priest, and the watchers, in haste
From unearthly slumbers broke:
For the nightmare's weight on their lungs had sate,
And the breath in their throats did choke.

With stiffened limb and eyeballs dim,
Cold as the coffin'd clay,
Where his blood ran red o'er the nuptial bed,
Expiring Albert lay.

But his faithful bride, who lay by his side,
Was still wrapp'd in slumber deep;
And her soft lips smiled, like a dreaming child,
'Twas a pure and an holy sleep.

At length like the rose in the morning that blows,
Her eyelids from slumber awake;
And like dewdrops her tears, mingle soft with her prayers,
For her suffering Albert's sake.

But she folded his face in her tender embrace,
  And her warm and virgin breath
Thaw'd the icy chains that froze his veins,
  And dispell'd the shades of death.

And words of good cheer she breathed in his ear,
  And with steady hand and calm,
And with cheek unblench'd, his wound she stanch'd
  With juice of the healing balm.

"Oh Albert! be cheer'd, my prayers have been heard,
  For lo! in her mercy mild,
The mother of God before me stood,
  And kiss'd her sleeping child:

"She bade me dig down, 'neath the altar stone,
  In St Peter's holy dome,
And thence shall I bring the sapphire ring
  In triumph from the tomb!"

She is gone to the fane, with a priestly train,
With vestment, and banner, and cross;
The church bells they ring, and the choristers sing,
And the censers they zealously toss:

Then with pick-axe and spade, ten lab'rers essay'd
The ponderous stone to move;
And though the priests sung, and the censers swung,
In vain the labourers strove.

But in purpose stout, and with heart devout,
Is the virtuous maiden gone:
When the virtuous maid lent her feeble aid,
Up sprung the lighten'd stone.

Five yards under ground a coffin they found,
Of strange unwonted shape;
And the cold wet clay was red where it lay,
And the coffin-lid did gape!

They lifted the lid, and the shroud they undid,
  But what they saw underneath—
The horrible sight that congeal'd them quite—
  I almost fear to breathe.

Beneath a shroud, stain'd and spotted with blood,
  A female naked lay!
On her clenched hand shone a sapphire stone,
  In her corpse there was no decay!

Her eyes did stare with a demon glare,
  A girdle bound her waist;
And words unknown on the charmed zone
  Mysteriously were traced.

Her veins accurs'd seem'd ready to burst,
  She was gorged with infernal food;
And the vampire mouth foam'd with crimson froth;
  Her very pores oozed blood.

The lab'rers shrunk—and, fainting, sunk
  Back from the hideous sight;
And the priests fled the church, and rush'd out at
    the porch,—
  They almost went mad with affright.

But the Virgin Bride in her maiden pride,
  In her love and virtue brave,
A crucifix press'd to her noble breast,
  And sprung into the grave.

"That which was given in the sight of Heaven,
  I bid thee, Fiend, restore;
That ring I claim in His awful name,
  Whom the Powers of Hell adore:

"By His holy sign, I bid thee resign,
  Demon, thy right for ever;—
Whom God doth join at His sacred shrine,
  Presume not thou to sever."

The Vampire shook at the words she spoke,
  In an instant the palm open'd wide;
From its finger she drew the sapphire blue,
  As drops from the icicle glide.

When the zone they unlaced from around its waist,
  Its bright eyes with fury gleam'd;
When they thrust a dart through its swollen heart,
  It convulsively shiver'd and scream'd;

And the red blood thereout did gush and did spout,
  Till it sprinkled the chancel roof;
So vehement it sprung, that no fountain e'er flung
  With like force its waters aloof.

But the carcass foul of the carrion Goule
  Grew flaccid, and meagre, and thin—
As a huge bladder blown, when the air is gone
  Shrivels up into wrinkled skin.

They lifted the bier from its sepulchre,
  Holy water they sprinkled around,
And lo! where it lay on the blood-stain'd clay,
  A passage went under ground.

It led to the tombs and the long catacombs
  Beneath the churchyard wall;
Where the Goules and Sprites keep on Sabbath nights[1]
  Their unholy Carnival.

And spiders unclean, and huge earth-grubs, were seen
  Beneath the coffin to twine;
But the spider and worm own'd the pow'r of the charm,
  For never a one crawl'd within.

From the loathing shrine of Saint Peter divine
  They cast the Vampire forth,
But none could declare how it ever came there,
  In consecrated earth.

[1] The Witches' Sabbath.

To the ramparts they hurried the carcass unburied,
  Where the murderer's limbs are thrown,
Where the foxes prowl, and the gaunt wolves howl,
  As they gnash the mangled bone.

'Twas noon, but a lurid and sulphurous glare
  Eclipsed the meridian sun;
A sickly heat taints the murky air,
  A whirlwind comes rushing on!

"It came rushing and roaring, like a cataract pouring
  Over a mountain rock;" [1]
And the crashing thunder rent the vapours asunder—
  It was felt like an earthquake's shock!

[1] These two lines are borrowed from Southey's ballad, "The Old Woman of Berkeley," and throughout the whole of these stanzas the author pleads guilty to the appropriation of many thoughts and phrases which may be found *passim* in former tales of horror and wonder. I have, indeed, been informed, that Moore has written a ballad upon this very subject; but I have never seen it, or heard of it in any edition of his works.

The flashing levin, from the blood-red Heaven,
  Blazed o'er the Vampire dead;
When the hurricane-roar was heard no more,
  Corpse, coffin, and girdle were fled!

And the self-same flash to the pavement did dash
  In fragments the cinctured stone:—
So the wrath Divine, in Philistia's shrine,
  Hurl'd Dagon from his throne.

* * * * * *

'Twere long to relate what joys await
  Albert recall'd to life;
But this believe, that none e'er did receive
  A more faithful and virtuous wife.

When he saw the well-known ring of sapphire stone,
  Tears of joy stream'd down his cheek;
When his bride he press'd to his grateful breast,
  His heart swell'd, but he could not speak.

But once in each year the live-long night
  Is spent in devotion and prayer;
On the fatal night of the Vampire's bite
  Blood runs from his bosom's scar.

And till morning light doth his lady bright
  Hymns to the Virgin sing—
As the fiendish wail sounds along the gale,
  Bemoaning the sapphire ring.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

THE RECESS.

IMITATED AND PARAPHRASED FROM ODE II., EPODION LIB. HORAT.

" Beatus ille, qui procul negotiis."

BLEST is the man whom fortune leads
Back to his lawns and bowers and meads;
Who, far from London's dingy town,
Can call each passing hour his own;
Who, freed from business, smoke, and care,
Inhales again a purer air,
Untainted by the poisonous steam
Of noisome gas, or putrid stream
Mingling beneath the crowded Mall
Compounds of filth unutt'rable.
But Heaven's own perfume wafted over
The scented bean and waving clover,

Which, borne on July's balmy breath
From fragrant banks of tufted heath
Water'd by the mountain showers,
Such rapture on the senses pours,
That wearied nature woos repose,
Where the plashing streamlet flows;
Where, high arching overhead,
The trees a grateful coolness spread;
Where the wild bird's tuneful throat
Warbles untaught its silvan note,
And "the bee, with honied thigh,"
Murmurs its choral minstrelsy;
There let him ponder, all unseen,
Stretch'd on the smooth and dewy green;
While airy visions, vague and vain,
Like elves from Morpheus' shadowy train,
Glance swift in ever-varying stream,
"'Twixt waking thought and sleeping dream."
Rapt from her sphere, the immortal mind,
(Mysterious essence!) unconfined,

Casting aside the fleshly coil
That binds her to a blighted soil,
From guilt, and wrath, and envy shriven,
Holy converse holds with Heaven.

Blest is the man, and trebly blest,
In health, in innocence, in rest,
Whose home affords a calm retreat
From jostling mart and noisy street;
Whose sleep no clanging trumpet's jar
Wakes to the loud alarms of war;
Who wisely dreads the faithless main,
Unmoved by all the cares of gain;
Who shuns alike the monarch's state,
And brawling faction's keen debate,
Where disappointed placemen rave
For what *they want* and *others have*,
Yet so disguise the selfish theme,
That fools are juggled, when they seem
To play the patriot's nobler part,
With Chatham's mask, and Melcombe's heart.

But he the while delights to twine
The tendrils of the trellised vine,
And pruning the redundant shoot,
Engrafts it from a worthier root;
Or far removed from human ken,
Down in some low sequester'd glen,
Watches the nibbling flocks that rest
Upon the mountain's shadowy breast;
Or heaps along the river banks
Shorn fleeces from their lighten'd flanks;
Or in her native hive explores,
With curious search, the wild bee's stores.

And when the golden Autumn reigns
Luxuriant o'er the waving plains,
What plenteous crops enrich his hoard,
What fruits adorn his festive board!
How proudly then the swain shall raise
Altars to fabled Bacchus' praise,
And hang with wreaths Sylvanus' shrine,
Old guardian of the bound'ry line!

But when stern Winter's withering breeze
Moans among the leafless trees,
And feather'd snow-flakes, whirling by,
Gleam white against the darken'd sky,
Be then the time, at break of morn,
To cheer the woods with hound and horn;
Rouse from among the echoing rocks,
The startled doe or cavern'd fox;
And urge to speed the foaming horse,
Exulting in his forward course.
Or with the practised gun from far
Smite as it bounds the trembling hare;
Nor shall the pheasant's painted throat
Protect him from the glowing shot;
Nor, fring'd with sedges, shall the lake
Secure from harm the freckled drake.

Sports such as these may sure beguile
The Stoic to a transient smile,
May smooth Ambition's brow of care,
May blunt the shaft of fell despair

Aim'd at the Lover's bleeding heart,
And stanch his wound, and ease his smart.

But should a tender wife within,
And infant children's playful din,
Wake the glad echoes round the hearth
With oft-repeated jest and mirth,
(As down old Cheviot's mountain track,
Northumbrian matrons welcome back
Their hardy hunter, homeward bound
When evening shadows lengthen round,
And crown the board with cheer unbought,
The moorfowl, and the speckled trout
Late struggling in the neighb'ring stream,
The honey-comb, and foaming cream ;)
Then would I scorn each dainty stew'd
By Crockford's far-famed artist, Ude,
The greenest turtle's melting skin,
Or royal sturgeon's costlier fin;
Turn loathing from the bloated liver
Of goose destroy'd by food and fever,

And leave the ortolan a prey
To ********* and ********.
These are not sweeter than the nut
Or juice of golden apricot;
Or choicer than the mountain lamb,
Reft early from its bleating dam;[1]
Or healthier than the dewy morn,
On zephyr's pinions gaily borne
From old Tithonus' bed of roses,
When every herb and flower uncloses
Salutation meet to render
Before their monarch's throne of splendour.
Majestic from his eastern portal,
Rises the Lord of light immortal;
And clouds in thousand liveries roll'd,
Amber, amethyst, and gold,
Herald his course through highest Heaven,
Onward to the zenith driven.

[1] Hactenus Horatius. I have ventured to conclude the Paraphrase in seriousness, not in irony.

Wake, slumberer! with the waking sun,
Wake to thy morning orison!
Wake again to new delights,
Joyous days and tranquil nights,
Fairy dreams of health and gladness,
Undisturb'd by ought of sadness
Save to think on such as linger,
Spell-struck by Fashion's charmed finger,
Within her round of gay caprice,
Delusion, indolence, and vice.
Save in solitude to muse,
When twilight sheds its silent dews,
And Cynthia yokes her dragon car,
To greet young Hesper's flasning star,
Upon that dark and lonely hour
When earthly visions charm no more;
When the sun of life hath set,
And twilight's shadow deep'ning yet,
Reveals alone the yawning tomb
Amidst impenetrable gloom;

When, struggling on the palsied lips,
The parting soul, in death's eclipse,
Before the glazed and dizzy sight
Drops the veil of pitchy night.
Till a brighter morn shall rise
On other realms, in other skies,
Unchanging in eternal prime,
Unvexed by storms, unmark'd by time.

June 22, 1828.

HORAT. ODE III. LIB. I.

"SIC TE DIVA POTENS CYPRI."

IMITATION AND PARAPHRASE.

TO THE SHIP BARHAM,

WHICH TOOK OUT SIR WALTER SCOTT IN 1831.

THEE, may the Cyprian Goddess, in her power,
  Thee, the twin stars, of Leda born,
Protect in planetary hour,
  From fading eve to rosy morn!
And thee, the King of Tempests guard
  From sunken rock, and breaking wave,
(All winds, save Zephyr, being barr'd
  Within their mountain cave;)
Fair Ship! that bear'st our Minstrel o'er
To far Italia's classic shore,

Preserve him to his friends, and bring him home,
With health and strength renew'd, across th' Atlantic
foam!

His breast was surely fortified
With triple bars of oak and brass,
Who first upon the stormy tide
Ventured his fragile bark to guide,
And dared the distant main to pass;
Nor fear'd the rage of warring winds,
Upturning the rebellious seas,
And steer'd through nightly mist that blinds
To mortal ken each friendly star,
The pilot's beacon from afar,
Arcturus or the Pleiades.—
Him could no forms of death affright,
Who view'd with heart unmoved and steadfast sight
The wallowing monsters of the ocean;
And watch'd the melancholy night,
While winds and waves, in wild commotion,

Howl'd round th' Acroceraunian steep,
Where many a broken keel betrays the treacherous
deep.

In vain hath God's all-wise decree
Cleft the broad earth with trackless sea,
If ships, in bold defiance driven,
Cross the dread gulf ordain'd of Heaven.

Mankind, still eager to transgress,
Rush through forbidden wickedness;
Prometheus' daring soul
By fraud approach'd the beams that shone
Around great Jove's eternal throne,
And fire celestial stole.
Thence sprung a ghastly birth
Of torturing Fiends and Furies, thence
Red Plague and spotted Pestilence,
Fierce Fever and Consumption dire,
And Want and Madness thence conspire
To vex the sorrowing Earth;

And Death, whose step was mercifully slow,
Now dogs our daily path—a keen and watchful foe.

But Dædalus presumed to try
New paths along the azure sky,
  On wings to man denied;
The labour of Alcmena's son
Burst through the gates of Acheron,
  And stemm'd the Stygian tide.

  How shall the Thunderer sleep? or how
  Relax the terrors of his brow?
  Nought seems impossible to Man!
  We climb high Heaven itself, and scan
  With bold enquiry the mysterious maze
  Of God's creation, and the wond'rous ways
  (Albeit immeas'rable to human span)
  Of one Almighty Cause, one all pervading Plan.

THE FOX AND THE ROSE.

A FABLE.

A Rose, the sweetest of the grove,
Inspired a youthful Fox with love.
Each morning th' enamour'd brute,
At earliest dawn, commenced his suit,
Nor left the spot, till dewy night
Eclipsed the charmer from his sight.
He grew quite thin upon his passion,
Relinquishing almost the fashion
That used to tempt him (cunning sinner)
To snap up goslings for his dinner,
To throttle fowls, and strangle turkeys,
Such as his brethren's nightly work is.

"Dear Rose," he'd cry, "delicious Rose!
Take pity on a lover's woes!

Such tenderness as mine would move
A very stock or stone to love!
See with what care my feather'd brush
Sweeps every insect from your bush;
How cautiously I clear the ground
Of envious weeds that clasp you round
When couching near your fragrant root
I give to light each budding shoot—
And all unnoticed. Rose! 'tis hard
To linger on without reward.
Grant me permission once to sip
The sweetness of your ruby lip;
I tremble when I ask the favour,
But answer for my good behaviour."

The Rose replied, with some emotion,
"Touch'd as I am by your devotion,
And flatter'd by your predilections,
I entertain still some objections;
And, as you say I've won your heart,
I hope you'll take them in good part.

First, mind I don't intend to flout ye,
There's something horrid slang about ye;
You're handsome, that I don't deny;
But then you've such a roguish eye;
I can forgive your pointed nose,
Since it began to smell a Rose;
Your whiskers and your frill are neat;
Your tail superb,—with pretty feet;
But, as you sit, you look so cunning!—
You're very graceful when you're running.
Besides, I must object outright
To wandering about at night.
Ah, Sir! although you flatter me,
You are not what you ought to be;
And when I think of what you do,
My blush acquires a deeper hue.
Abroad at night you *must not* stir;
And, lastly, (you'll excuse me, Sir,)
Your smell is shocking, worse by far
Than brandy, snuff, or a cigar;

You must compassionate our noses,
Or leave off courting dainty Roses."

The Fox then took to his confessions;
And, owning all his past transgressions,
With much humility declared
Himself, in all respects, prepared
T'effect a thorough reformation,
If he might hope for consolation;
Till, finally, so much repentance
Induced a favourable sentence.
When Reynard found himself preferr'd,
He honourably kept his word;
Perfumed himself till he was sweet,
Lived on his love, and left off meat;
Would hardly touch the youngest rabbits;
Abandon'd all improper habits;
Walk'd out by day, by night kept quiet;
And took to vegetable diet.

Merrily pass'd the summer by,
Autumnal winds blew keen and high,
And Reynard thought (ungrateful fellow!)
His lovely Rose turn'd rather yellow.
October nights were damp and cold—
She certainly look'd thin and old;
Till every trace of beauty vanish'd,
By desolate November banish'd.

Our gentleman was rather bored,
And, while he much the change deplored,
Sought refuge from a tête-à-tête,
By sleeping long and roving late;
Began to think it might be pleasant
To eat a turkey, or a pheasant;
Which, when once tasted, Lord defend us!
His appetite grew quite tremendous:—
Chickens were delicate and tender,
And if he miss'd a goose or gander

By th' water side, 'twas dev'lish luck
When he could not surprise a duck.
So terrible his devastation,
The neighb'ring farmers cried—"Damnation!
If huntsmen won't destroy such vermin,
Ourselves their punishment determine."

So said, so done—they strew'd his path
With divers instruments of wrath;
Lay wait with guns, and fill'd the gaps
With snares and pitfalls, gins and traps;
Till, to a hen-roost having watch'd him,
They shut the entrance, and despatch'd him.

MORAL.

So, in St James's, have I seen
A young and reckless libertine,
Abjure his former odious vices,
His foibles, follies, and caprices;

And seem to borrow sudden sense
From Love's delightful influence.
He pays his debts, discards his whore,
No longer drives a stage and four,
Nor cares what horses fill the stalls
At Tilbury's or Tattersall's,
Nor makes his morning lounge the stable,
Nor frets all night o'er Crockford's table.
No more he puffs tobacco smoke,
Nor spreads with glee a vulgar joke;
Nor reels down Bond Street home to bed,
With pocket picked, and broken head,
But acts in all things with propriety,
And takes to civilized society.—
Cymon of yore, th' Athenian fool,
Such lessons learn'd in Cupid's school,
And read of arms and knightly prize
In bright Iphigenia's eyes.—
But Love oft flies on Beauty's wings,
And female charms are transient things,

And still the husband should remember
That hurricanes in bleak November
May blast and wither all too soon
The lovely rose that pleased in June.
And oh! if angry words shall sever
The hymeneal bond for ever,
And constant bickerings aggravate
The loss of love to deadly hate,—
What then remain on this lone earth,
But vain attempts at hollow mirth,
Recurrence to an idle stage
That cheer'd in youth, but shames in age;
The cold delusive stage of Fashion,
That stimulant of jaded passion!
Thence both are unresisting hurl'd
Within the vortex of the world,
And yielding to its giddy suction,
Are swiftly hurried to destruction.

STANZAS

IN MATREM CARISSIMAM.

SAGES have said that nought on earth
  Is fixed, or permanent, or true,—
That all is change to death from birth,
  A shadowy dream, a fleeting view.

And poets sing of fading flowers,
  Of chequer'd skies, and restless seas;—
Of pleasures transient as the hours
  That glide along the passing breeze;—

While man himself keeps silent pace
  With Nature's ever-varying doom,
And runs the universal race
  Between the cradle and the tomb.

That race he runs with toil and care,
  With throbbing heart and lab'ring breath;
Whose road is sin, whose hopes are air,
  Whose joys are pains, whose goal is death:—

Sees as he runs, each changing moon
  Her destined change of seasons bring;
Each night's repose succeed to noon,
  Each winter lead the year to spring:

And should he turn aside to cherish
  Some fairer flower that decks the way,
A moment sees its beauty perish,
  Or taints its fragrance with decay.

A few short hours remain to drink
  Life's troubled dregs, of bitter taste;
A pause upon the churchyard's brink,
  A throb—a pang, and all is past.

Is there then nought secure or fix'd;
No resting place this side the grave?
No shelt'ring olive bough betwixt
The shifting sand and whelming wave?—

No bright Oasis of the waste,
Where weary travellers awhile
Reposing from their breathless haste,
May greet a sympathizing smile?

Yes—if from birth the will of Heaven
Decree to man a life of care;—
From the same instant God hath given
A mother's heart our pain to share;

A mother's hand to guide our steps,
A mother's eye to watch our ways;
A mother's voice to teach our lips
The suppliant's prayer, the hymn of praise.

And from the hour when first her breast
  Pillow'd in warmth our infant head,
To that when everlasting rest
  Shall shroud her in its narrow bed;

In every change of tide or time,
  In summer's heat, in winter's snow,
In every age, in every clime,
  In guilt, in danger, or in woe:

Though foes may hate, and friends may leave us,
  Though all our hopes delusive prove;
Though women smile as they deceive us,
  And rend the heart they swore to love·

Whether in pleasure's lap of down,
  We idly waste the precious day;
Or, chill'd by dark misfortune's frown,
  Lament those hours we've cast away;

Whether our young ambition soar
  To worship glory's rising star,
Nor dreams the idol we adore
  May crush us 'neath her iron car:

In sickness, solitude, or shame,
  Whate'er betide this mortal state,
A mother's heart is still the same
  In each vicissitude of fate.

There is the bough whereon is placed
  Brief refuge from a stormy life;
There the Oasis of the waste,
  A sunny spot, secure from strife.

And when inexorable Death
  Shall mix her ashes with the sod,
Her soul shall plead for those beneath,
  Before the judgment throne of God.

THE CLANSMAN'S LAST ERRAND.

The incident giving rise to the following stanzas is not altogether imaginary. The gallant Earl of Strathmore, who fell at Sheriffmuir, in the ill-concerted rising of 1715, the Author's maternal ancestor, is said to have sent home his sword by the hands of an old domestic. The Chief of Glengarry was slain in the battle of Culloden, and his castle plundered and burnt by the victors.

Clansman loqur.

"Ah, yes! my lost chieftain, thy sword I'll deliver,
Tho' wounded and faint, on the journey I bleed;
And vainly the forest, the rock, and the river,
Shall, in rugged succession, my progress impede.

"Fast and far let me haste from the field of Culloden,
Gory bed of the heroes who sleep in their steel!
How darkly confirming the curst Prophet's bodin',
When he blasted the path of the fearless Lochiel.

"Then lend me thy swiftness, thou red rushing torrent,
Royal bird of the mountain, supply me thy pinion!
And on let me hasten, while life's glowing current
O'er pain and o'er death still asserts my dominion.

"Adieu to thy shores, fair Loch Ness! and in hurry
Let me glide past the fortress[1] that frowns on thy wave,
For lo! where in distance the peak of Glas Corri
Gleams grey o'er thy castle, Macdonald the brave!

"Ah! who on yon height will sit lonely and weary,
Her locks streaming wide on the wild mountain air?
'Tis the bride of my Chieftain, the bride of Glengarry,
That awaits the dark tidings of death and despair!

"For the Prince who departed triumphant and regal,
Like a young lion urging his desperate way;

[1] Fort Augustus.

Now must share the lone couch of the wolf and the
eagle,
That have scented their victims, and yell round the
prey.

"And of all whom Glengarry, indignantly scorning
False Hanover's menace, led forth in his pride—
One, wounded and breathless, alone is returning,
To relate how the Chief of his kindred hath died.

"Still distant awhile is that kindred of sorrow,
And faintly my fugitive footsteps move on;
Yet, let me but reach them, and blithely to-morrow
My life I'll resign, when my errand is done.

"But, no—'tis denied me,—this last sacred duty,
That I swore to my Chief when in death pangs he
gasp'd;
When he dream'd of his lady all beaming in beauty,
And kiss'd the red turf that his agony clasp'd.

"For tho' the breeze freshens, it gives me no fleetness,
And tho' the sun brightens, I feel not his ray;
And tho' the broom blossoms, I scent not its sweetness,
For, oh God! the last life-drops are oozing away."

They found the poor clansman, his eyeballs distended,
His hand stiffly clenched on the blade that he bore;
High resolve on his features with sadness was blended,
As he'd struggled with fate for one short hour more.

ODE TO AN EAGLE.

ÆTHERIAL bird! that on the mountain's peak,
  Reposing in the sun thy mighty pinions,
Look'st from thy throne of clouds o'er cliff and creek,
Or with expanded plumes and sharpen'd beak,
  Rangest at will thy undisturb'd dominions,
Majestic monarch of the sky!
How mean appears man's destiny,
When, sailing in the blue profound,
Thou wheel'st in measur'd circles round!
Or borrowest the lightning's speed,
Such as of old rapt Ganymede
Beheld thee darting from above
The winged messenger of Jove!
Him thy resounding plumage bore
Aloft from Simois' winding shore,

To minister in blest abodes,
An earthborn cupbearer to gods;
While his reft flock, o'er Ida driven,
Gazed on their guardian's flight to heaven.

Bird of rapine! bird of glory!
Who, in the page of Grecian story,
Hath follow'd Ammon's warrior son
To Issus' plain from Macedon,
Nor wondering mark'd thy victor wing,
High poised above the heroic king!
He, borne along the waves of war,
Dash'd on the mitred Persian's car,
And hail'd thee from his steed of fire,
Proud omen of his awful sire.

Lordly bird of high dominion!
Under thine imperial pinion
Rome her banners wide unfurl'd,
Mistress of a prostrate world!
From Calpe's cliffs, and Afric's sand,
To sea-girt Thulé's bounding strand;

From the banks of fair Garonne,
To thy dark ruins, Babylon,
Hear her shouts victorious ring,
Triumphant mark her eagle wing.

Bird of conquest, bird of sorrow!
A later tyrant dared to borrow
The splendour of thy magic name,
And nobly won the wreath of fame.
O'er Alpine snows, and Adda's flood,
Trace his ruthless path in blood;
Austrian maids shall long abhor
Red Marengo's conqueror.
Him Vienna's sons await,
Mourning at her broken gate:
While her Danube's mazy flow
A moment checks th' advancing foe—
How sternly calm th' invader sits
Amid thy carnage, Austerlitz!
How scornful hears, on Jena's plain,
A royal heroine plead in vain!

His star is waned—his race is run!—
Where is dread Napoleon?
Gallia's eagle backward driven,
Quail'd beneath an arctic heaven;
Europe's conqueror subdued,
Lies in his rocky solitude:
A thousand leagues of salt sea foam
Have borne him to his island home;
Here his crimes and sorrows cease——
The mighty exile sleeps in peace.
——— And haply thou, sad bird and lone,
With drooping wing and ruffled plume,
Above the warrior's lowly tomb,
Sit'st like a spirit, on thy mountain throne,
To guard from touch profane his monumental stone.

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